

# ILE-A-LA-CROSSE SCHOOL DIVISION OUTDOOR EDUCATION SAFETY GUIDE



*Never give children a chance of imagining that anything exists in isolation. Make it plain from the very beginning that all living is relationship. Show them relationships in the woods, in the fields, in the ponds and streams, in the village and in the country around it. Rub it in. (Aldous Huxley)*



COMPILED AND WRITTEN FOR ILE-A-LA-CROSSE SCHOOL DIVISION 112,  
WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:

Past and present members of the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Board who have promoted outdoor education for the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual learning of our students.

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The Elders of the community who continue to share their knowledge of the land.

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

*The safety of our students is a prime concern of our school division. The design of an outdoor learning program, the implementation of its curriculum, and the actions of staff and students must reflect this priority.*

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Outdoor education has always been offered by the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division, from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12. Phys. Ed. teachers use the outdoors as a classroom for seasonal sports such as canoeing, skating or cross-country skiing. Homeroom teachers take students outside for curriculum activities, community excursions, or day trips - canoeing, hiking, blueberry-picking. Wildlife and Northern Life courses include traditional activities such as snaring and fishing. Outdoor education clubs participate in winter camping and multi-day canoe trips, and an annual Cultural Camp gives students a cultural and traditional experience of life on the land.

Ile-a-la-Crosse is ideally located for outdoor education - at the confluence of three northern rivers, in a habitat of lakes and boreal forest. There is a diversity of vegetation, wildlife and terrain that has sustained the community since its first days as a fur trading post in 1776. Outdoor education in our school division is about more than just the environment; it is about the history, culture and language of the community. The Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division therefore sees outdoor education as an essential part of our school programming.

A Wilderness Camp was first considered by the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division in 2000. It was originally intended as a full program of studies for a cohort group of at-risk youth. A site was chosen and a program of studies was developed but, for a variety of reasons, it was decided to postpone the Camp to a future time. For most of the years since then, the School Division focused its energy and resources on building our new integrated facility, but the concept of a wilderness camp was often discussed at board meetings.

In 2010, a Storefront Program was introduced in the school division. Its purpose was to enable at-risk youth to upgrade their academic skills and earn high school credits, and to provide life skills, cultural learnings and spiritual support. Students were given the opportunity to learn traditional skills on the land. This Storefront Program revived interest in a wilderness camp.

In the fall of 2011, meetings were held that included the Storefront instructor, board members, teachers, students and Elders. In these meetings, the focus shifted away from the concept of a wilderness camp for a cohort group. Instead, it was decided that the Storefront Program might be the starting point for a Wilderness Camp that would serve all students in the school division, from Pre-K to 12.

**1.2 Vision:** The vision for the Wilderness Camp was *to create a world-class outdoor education site that might serve students of all ages in the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division.* The camp would provide a wide range of outdoor and environmental education opportunities for students of all ages: including the following:

- ∞ Cultural Camps
- ∞ Hiking/Nature Trails
- ∞ Canoeing
- ∞ Environmental and Science Education
- ∞ Practical and Applied Arts (P&AA)
- ∞ Trades Training: Carpentry and Construction
- ∞ Traditional food gathering and processing

**1.2 Purpose:** The intent was to incorporate the Canadian Council of Learning foundation of learning for Metis students, which states that the Land is an essential part of learning (<http://www.cclcca.ca/CCL/Reports/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning/RedefiningSuccessModels.html>).

- ∞ To teach appreciation and respect for the land which, in turn, will develop advocates for the land and respect for people.
- ∞ To give our students time and exposure to the land so they will be comfortable and confident in the bush, in nature. (Instead of *âtawiyimisowin*, there should be *tâpwihtâsowin*: “to believe in yourself”.)
- ∞ To give students a chance to put the Medicine Wheel into practice.

**1.3 Program:** The outdoor learning would integrate academic and cultural outcomes:

- ∞ A program designed to address the achievement gap - that supports the academic teaching of all Elementary and High School students, including Storefront students.
- ∞ “Place-based” education: Making the connection between physical activity and cognitive learning.
- ∞ A flexible and harmonious scheduling plan that gives the Wilderness School the blocks of time it will require – a modular and integrated approach to curriculum. The Wilderness School should be “hard-wired” or “blended” into the school system.
- ∞ Curriculum connections: Writing about their experiences (ELA); monitoring water, identifying trees and wildlife (Science, Biology), lots of physical activity (Wellness, Phys. Ed.)
- ∞ Every child has time in the outdoors: “enjoying themselves”, “play learning”, “food gathering and cooking”, “storytelling”, “listening to Elders”, “learning how to laugh.”
- ∞ Older students supervising younger ones, developing leadership skills and qualities of caring and nurturing, “acting out the Medicine Wheel.”
- ∞ Michif language learning integrated into the outdoor curriculum and all Wilderness Camp activities.

**1.4 Action:** A Wilderness Camp site was chosen at the end of Rosser Bay and site development began in early 2012. It was decided that there should be a central shelter or building or tipi that would serve as a gathering point. In collaboration with Northlands Regional College, a building was constructed by the WIIT (Women in the Industrial Trades) students, and a tipi was later erected beside the pond. Our Wilderness Camp was

officially opened in August of 2012 - a collective creation that involved WIIT students, Elders, teachers, school board members, school division personnel and the Village of Ile-a-la-Crosse.

Staff were inserviced and oriented to the site, and student excursions began in the 2012-2013 school year. Students of all ages now visit the Wilderness Camp for curricular and cultural learnings, along with their teachers, EAs, parents and Elders.

The curriculum of the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division Outdoor Education Program is embedded in the province's Broad Areas of Learning, as italicized below.

#### **Broad Areas of Learning**

*The Broad Areas of Learning reflect the desired attributes for Saskatchewan's PreK-12 students. The descriptions below show the knowledge (factual, conceptual, procedural, metacognitive) that students will achieve throughout their PreK-12 schooling career.*

**Sense of Self, Community, and Place:** Students possess a positive sense of identity and understand how it is shaped through interactions *within natural and constructed environments*. They are able to nurture meaningful relationships and *appreciate diverse beliefs, languages, and practices from the First Peoples of Saskatchewan* and from the diversity of cultures in our province. Through these relationships, students demonstrate empathy and a deep understanding of self, others, and *the influence of place on identity*. In striving to balance their intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual dimensions, *students' sense of self, community, and place is strengthened*.

**Lifelong Learners:** Students are *curious, observant, and reflective* as they imagine, *explore*, and construct knowledge. They demonstrate the understandings, abilities, and dispositions necessary to learn from *subject discipline studies, cultural experiences, and other ways of knowing the world*. Such ways of knowing support students' *appreciation of Indigenous worldviews* and learning about, with, and from others. Students are able to engage in inquiry and collaborate in learning experiences that address the needs and interests of self and others. Through this engagement, students demonstrate a passion for lifelong learning.

**Engaged Citizens:** Students demonstrate confidence, courage, and commitment in shaping positive change for the benefit of all. They contribute to the *environmental*, social, and economic sustainability of *local and global communities*. Their informed life, career, and consumer decisions support positive actions that recognize a broader relationship with, and responsibility for, *natural and constructed environments*. Along with this responsibility, students recognize and respect the mutual benefits of Charter, Treaty, and other constitutional rights and relationships. Through this recognition, students advocate for self and others, and act for the common good as engaged citizens.

The addition of the Wilderness Camp to our outdoor education programming has created the need for a risk management policy – a set of safety protocols and procedures for the school division. What follows is therefore an Outdoor Education Safety Guide not just for the Wilderness Camp, but for all outdoor education activities in the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division.



## **2.0 RISK MANAGEMENT: AN INTRODUCTION**

“Risk” is a small but weighty word that we apply to all aspects of our lives - personal, professional, recreational. It is a measure of the degree of *hazard*, *exposure* or *danger* present in a given activity that might lead to accident, injury or even loss.

Educational activities are no exception. There are risks associated with nearly every place of education – from the bus to the gym to the lab to the classroom. And we know that risk can never be fully eliminated; there is no such thing as “zero risk” anywhere in our lives, nor in the lives of our students. In fact, many of our most exciting learning and life experiences come from the acceptance of a certain level of risk.

This certainly includes experiential learning opportunities in a wilderness environment. Given the unpredictability of nature, weather and circumstance, outdoor learning has its own set of risks. These are usually thought of in terms of personal physical injury. The responsibility of the school division is to minimize these risks. It should apply a level of “due diligence” so that reasonable precautions are in place for all students and staff.

A systematic system for identifying, assessing, mitigating or controlling risks is critical for meeting the standard of due diligence. If and when accidents do occur, a process should be in place to respond to them efficiently and effectively. We call this “risk management.”

This guidebook therefore sets out recommended minimum operating practices and protocols for ensuring the safety of our students, while ensuring that students and staff are always prepared for the unexpected. Risk can never be eliminated, but it can be minimized.

This guidebook is a starting point for risk management in the outdoor learning program of the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division. It is a “starting point” because risk management should be a dynamic, responsive process of adaptation and change; it should always be a “work-in-progress” so that the level of safety continually improves.

## **3.1 RISK MANAGEMENT: A COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY**

Risk management is a collective responsibility, involving the school division, school administration, staff and students. All must be constantly looking for ways to manage and improve the outdoor learning experience. All must contribute so that there is an integrated, systemic approach to minimizing risk and ensuring safety.

**3.2 School Division:** As part of its due diligence, the school division must provide a reasonable level of care to students and staff, which should include the following:

- ∞ Hiring qualified instructional staff
- ∞ Providing professional development for staff supervisors (ie. First Aid/CPR)
- ∞ Providing safe equipment, transportation and communication devices
- ∞ Requiring trip plans, safety talks, curriculum planning, incident reports
- ∞ Outlining required and recommended practices
- ∞ Providing appropriate insurance

- ∞ Hosting an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) program to monitor workplace safety (including wilderness facilities) and to recommend policies and procedures

**3.3 Instructional and Support Staff:** Everyone who works in an outdoor education program must work safely and always encourage others to do the same. As in any school environment, staff must ensure safety by:

- ∞ Reading outdoor education safety guidelines
- ∞ Conducting themselves according to safe work procedures and protocols
- ∞ Avoiding inappropriate conduct that may endanger the self or students
- ∞ Ensuring that supervision is not impaired by stimulants or fatigue
- ∞ Reporting unsafe conditions or equipment to the school administration

#### 4.0 RISK FACTORS IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Outdoor learning programs encompass a wide variety of activities - canoeing, swimming, skiing, snowshoeing, snaring, camping, hiking or just walking. Within each of these categories is a wide range of risk factors that vary by activity, conditions and participants. For example, the risks inherent in white-water canoeing differ from those of flat-water canoeing; each has its own spectrum of risks, depending on the classification and length of rapids, the size and condition of lakes, and the skill level of the students. Weather conditions – temperature, UV radiation, wind, precipitation - can also influence risk, as can the age and experience of the students and the expertise of their supervisors. Risk management is therefore a complex responsibility, with all kinds of situational and environmental factors.

Risk factors are usually associated with *people*, *equipment* and *environment*.<sup>1</sup> The greater the number of risks related to these factors, the greater the chance that an incident or accident might occur. And most accidents are the result of a combination of these three risk factors:

- ∞ **People:** age, skill level, attitudes, experience, health & fitness, group size
- ∞ **Equipment:** clothing, shelter, safety equipment (lifejackets, helmets, whistles, etc.), first aid kits, communication devices.
- ∞ **Environment:** weather (wind, temperature, precipitation, wind chill, UV index), terrain, water conditions (length and class of rapids, size and condition of lakes), snow conditions, flora and fauna (poisonous plants, wildlife).

#### 5.1 REQUIRED, RECOMMENDED AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

Risk management is therefore complicated – too complicated for a comprehensive “one-size-fits-all” set of standards. Instead, an effective outdoor learning program consists of a set of generally accepted practices. A “practice” is *a common, habitual or expected way of doing something* – a recommended action or procedure.<sup>2</sup> Practices fall into three categories – the 3 R’s of outdoor education:

**5.2 Required Practice:** These are safety procedures required by legislation or by school division policy, such as the use of life jackets in watercraft, the ratio of students per adult during outdoor excursions, communications equipment, First Aid kits, CPR/First Aid certification. These include consistent procedures for teachers and administrators such as:



parental permission, curriculum planning, trip planning, emergency procedures, incident reports.

**5.3 Recommended practice:** These are guidelines, or common practices, for specific outdoor activities: loading and launching canoes, hiking supervision, set-up and take-down procedures, firepits and fire safety, inclement weather, response to wild animals. These may include optional practices for situations that require adaptation or flexibility – when the context of the situation needs to be assessed before an action can be determined.

**5.4 Reflective Practice:** These are practices that are in response to the 3 U's – Unique, Unusual or Unexpected situations. Given the unpredictability of nature, there will often be times when staff and students will have to make a decision that requires creativity and adaptation because they are “not in the book.”

Here is an example of how an instructor might consider risk factors and various required, recommended, and reflective practices. Imagine a group of students who arrive at a set of rapids and face a choice between running and portaging. All of the required practices have been met: parental permission, a trip plan, first aid kit, life jackets, communications equipment, proper supervision. The instructor still has a number of choices, all involving risk assessment and management. Knowing there is no such thing as zero risk, the instructor will weigh the various risk factors and make a choice, drawing on both recommended and reflective practice:

Risk reduction: The instructor might have the students portage all gear, then review techniques and plan a sequence that will enable safe passage through the rapids, as well as strategies for rescue, if needed. They will draw on both required practice (life jackets) and recommended practice (techniques, signals, order and spacing of canoes) for running these rapids.

Risk mitigation: The absence of a portage might require a combination of running, wading and lining. Again, this would require a combination of required (life jackets) and recommended (signals, spacing, choice of lining, paddling or carrying) practices to minimize and mitigate risks.

Risk avoidance: Given the difficulty or length of the rapids, the skill level of the students, the time of day, or weather conditions, the instructors might decide to have the students portage the rapids. This would be a reflective and cautionary practice, given the particular circumstance or situation.

If an accident were to occur in any of the above situations, the instructor(s) would use the required practices for communicating with parents and reporting incidents.

## **6.1 THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

It is important to apply the “precautionary principle” in outdoor education – to establish a minimum operating standard with respect to **skills, supervision, equipment, environment, communications and identification of hazards**:

**6.2 Skills:** The curriculum should accommodate the skill levels of the participants. For educators, this means planning in advance for the least able or least skilled students so that their safety is not compromised. There should not have to be major changes to course content while the activity is in progress. Planning should also accommodate the skill level and expertise of the teacher and supervisors. Supervisors must be aware of their own physical, technical and experiential limitations and only undertake activities that are within their capabilities. Our students have the right to expect that their teachers and supervisors have the knowledge and resources to keep them safe.

**6.3 Supervision:** Planning should include a minimum standard of adult supervision. For outdoor learning activities outside the school yard and community, the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division requires the following ratios of students to adult supervisors:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
Pre-K to 3	Walking/Hiking	5:1
Pre-K to 3	Lake Wading/Swimming	4:1
Pre-K to 3	Cross-country skiing	5:1
4-6	Walking/Hiking	8:1
4-6	Swimming	4:1
4-6	Camping	8:1
7-12	Walking/Hiking	8:1
7-12	Swimming	6:1
7-12	Camping	6:1
10-12	Canoeing: Day Trip	6:1
10-12	Canoeing: Multi Day	6:1

#### **6.4 Environment: *Kaniwihta aski***

There is another dimension of risk management that must be an essential component of any outdoor education program – the risk to environment. We always leave some footprint when we hike, camp or canoe. The only way to achieve zero risk to the environment would be to keep our students in the school and off the trails and waterways. With this reality in mind, the goal should be **to minimize our students' effect on the environment** – to leave outdoor sites as undisturbed as possible and as natural. We must integrate risk management for the environment at every stage of outdoor education – planning, implementing and evaluating.

**6.5 Equipment:** Appropriate and well-functioning equipment must be used at all times. Planning should include the requisition and preparation of equipment that will meet the needs of all students and supervisors.

- ∞ The quantity of equipment must be adequate for the activity.
- ∞ The equipment is regularly inspected - and retired when unsafe.
- ∞ The equipment is in good condition and has been repaired and maintained as required.
- ∞ The equipment is being used for its intended purpose.
- ∞ Safety adjustments are made, if necessary. (Ski bindings, canoe bailers, etc.)

- ∞ The First Aid kit and communications equipment are available for the activity.
- ∞ Students (and parents) are informed of the basic clothing and footwear required for the activity.

An outdoor learning program must have a first aid kit on site. There should be a first aid kit at both Cultural Camp and Wilderness Camp sites, and all staff should be made aware of its location. An appropriately-equipped first aid kit must also accompany all wilderness excursions. The type of kit will depend on the length of excursion and distance from the nearest hospital. A multi-day canoe trip, for example, will require a superior first aid kit.

**6.6 Communications:** Some argue that the presence of technology detracts from a wilderness experience. However, in the case of student trips, safety comes first. For excursions to local areas such as South Bay or the Wilderness Camp, teachers should check ahead of time to see that there is cellular coverage and then carry an extra cell phone as back-up. For more remote trips or multi-day excursions, a satellite system must be carried, as well as a schedule and plan for communicating with the school administration. On every outdoor education trip, there should be a communications link to the school.

Supervisors should carry communications systems that are suitable for the student group, the program goals and objectives, the location and duration of the trip, and the terrain.

**6.7: Identification of Hazards:** A risk management plan identifies the field-based hazards a program might face – either environmental or human in nature. It is important to identify only plausible hazards; a list of all possible hazards would be infinite and unhelpful. A risk management plan should also give recommended practices for responding, with the understanding that circumstances may call for a unique response. **Appendix A (Environmental Hazards)** and **Appendix B (Human Hazards)** provide the beginning of such a plan<sup>3</sup>. As more hazards and recommended practices are identified, this plan will become more comprehensive. It should always be a work-in-progress.

## **7.1 PLANNING FOR SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

The most important element of a successful outdoor education program is planning. Parent/Guardian Permission forms, Trip Plans and Safety Talks are essential.

**7.2 Parent/Guardian Permission:** Outdoor educational activities are usually of a curricular nature and pose very little risk. Safety procedures, safety talks and equipment maintenance will minimize and mitigate risks that are present. For most outdoor education activities, such as daily walks, hikes or excursions to the Wilderness Camp, a general permission form can be used for the entire school year (**Appendix C**). For individual field trips or excursions, a parent/guardian form is provided in **Appendix D**.

For higher risk activities, a separate release, waiver or informed consent form should be created. This will ensure that students and parents are aware of the nature of the outdoor

education activity and the precautions that are in place to minimize risk. **Parental permission forms are a required practice for outdoor education activities that require overnight or multi-day camps or excursions.** They are both educational and inclusive; they inform the parent of the risk level of the activity and they enlist the parent's support.

**7.3 Trip Plans:** Trip planning should include weather-related preparation, assessment of potential hazards, communication and emergency procedures. Every outdoor education excursion should include a Trip Plan<sup>4</sup> with the following details:

1. Trip Summary: This should briefly outline the location of the trip, with a short narrative of the trip.
2. Time Plan: This section should provide a clear itinerary, with drop-off and pick-up times and estimated travel times. For multi-day expeditions, maps should be included with the route and campsites (if known).
3. Students: An accurate list of students should be attached or included.
4. Supervisors: A list of adult supervisors must be included, all of whom must be have school division approval. The number of supervisors must meet the minimum supervision ratio for the age and number of students.
5. Equipment: This section (or attachment) should include a list of personal equipment to be provided by the student or school.
6. Cost: If the excursion requires special approval or funding, this should be indicated on the Trip Plan or submitted separately.
7. Evaluation: This section is to describe the evaluation procedures that will be used after the trip.
8. Trip Approval: The School Principal will sign and date the Trip Plan to give approval. If the trip requires Board approval, the Director of Education will sign and date the Trip Plan on behalf of the Board.
9. Checklist: Parental permission, administrative approval, first aid kit, communications system, weather forecast and fire danger level, bus arrangements, emergency contacts.

A sample Day Trip Plan form is provided in **Appendix E**. A sample Multi-Day Trip form is provided in **Appendix F**. A Teacher/Supervisor Checklist is provided in **Appendix G**.

**7.4 Safety Talks:** Safety instructions should be given to students before any outdoor education activity<sup>5</sup>. These “safety talks” should outline risks or dangers and give adequate instructions on what to do to avoid mishaps. In the case of a walk or short hike, these instructions can be simple and brief. For activities of longer duration or higher risk, the safety talk will be more comprehensive – perhaps a complete lesson. For multi-day expeditions, a series of safety talks may be required. These will be an invaluable part of the students' outdoor education.

The following is a sample outline for a Safety Talk:

- ∞ Introduction: Explain the need to assume responsibility for their own and the group's safety, with a “buddy system” to encourage this.
- ∞ Trip Details - where they are going, how they will travel, how long they will be gone.

- ∞ Outline the hazards or dangers – weather, terrain, activity (ie. wind chill, bush trails, snow depth)
- ∞ Discuss clothing and footwear (ie. rain coats, rubber boots)
- ∞ Demonstrate proper use of equipment (ie. use of skis and poles)
- ∞ Demonstrate proper technique (ie. loading and launching a canoe)
- ∞ Explain what to do in case of an emergency (ie. someone lost or injured)
- ∞ Student Responsibilities:
  - Discuss physical demands and expectations.
  - Identify any medical or physical conditions that might affect performance.
  - Reinforce zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs.
  - Ask students to report incidents, accidents and equipment problems.
- ∞ Closing: Emphasize the role of the group (*It's not enough for each of us to do well. For the trip to be a success, we must all do well!*)

*Instructors should adopt an instructional style that educates, warns and asks for “buy in” from the student when embarking on high-risk activities. A competent instructor is able to demonstrate that students were aware of the risks and potential consequences before participating, and participated voluntarily in the activity. This message should be repeated daily at the program level, individual course level, and individual trip level, and repeated throughout the activity. (Risk Management for Outdoor Education Programs, Ministry of Advanced Education, Province of British Columbia)*

## **8.1 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

The school division and its staff must take reasonable steps to protect students and staff from foreseeable risks that have the potential to cause injury. Risk must be managed and minimized but, as indicated earlier, this does not eliminate risk. Accidents will happen, and these will almost always be minor – scrapes and scratches, sprains and strains. However, if a more serious situation does occur, it is important that emergency procedures be in place.

The effectiveness of emergency response is dependent on the level of Planning, Assessment, Time, Action and Communication:

**8.2 Planning:** Teachers/Supervisors must ensure that they are well-planned and well-prepared, so that incidents and accidents are prevented. Safety talks are an essential part of this planning so that students are fully aware of the risks and dangers of an activity – slipping or falling due to terrain, swamping or overturning due to rapids, etc. A list of all emergency phone numbers should be posted on site and carried by at least one supervisor. Emergency communications devices and contact numbers must be carried on multi-day expeditions:

**8.3 Assessment:** It is important that supervisors call for emergency assistance only when they have encountered a situation that they cannot handle in an adequate or timely manner. Example: For minor injuries, the supervisors may decide to provide temporary treatment and arrange transportation to the hospital. For major injuries that are time-sensitive, life-threatening or sensitive to movement, the supervisors may decide to call

911 so that EMTs are immediately dispatched. To report a fire, supervisors should call the Ile-a-la-Crosse Fire Cache at 306-833-3230, or Buffalo Narrows Fire Center at 1-306-235-1804.

***NOTE: The Ministry of Environment includes the Wilderness Camp in the “high priority” zone that surrounds the community of Ile-a-la-Crosse. Response would therefore be immediate in terms of fire-fighters, aircraft and, if necessary, evacuation.***

**8.4 Time:** Supervisors must quickly assess and recognize when a situation is beyond their capabilities and not wait too long before they call for assistance.<sup>6</sup> Example: If supervisors become aware of a forest fire in the area, they should make immediate plans to transport the students back to the community. In the case of the Ile-a-la-Crosse Wilderness Camp, an evacuation would be made from Highway 155. If this access was closed, a decision should quickly be made to call 911 and the Fire Cache and move the students to an agreed-upon pick-up point across the bay or, if necessary, to shallow water. ***Note: It is recommended that a class set of life preservers be stored at the Wilderness Camp site for the unlikely event of evacuation by water.***

**8.5 Action:** Supervisors must call for the appropriate emergency response and interact calmly and professionally with the responders who arrive: RCMP, EMTs or Fire Fighters.

**8.6 Communication:** In the event of an accident during an outdoor education excursion, it is essential that immediate communication be made to school division administrators and parents/guardians. This protocol requires teachers to report the accident to their principal (or vice-principal) who, in turn, will inform the Director of Education and contact parents. Information should be presented in an accurate and sensitive manner to parents, and in a professional and discretionary manner to the community or media. **The communication line is therefore from teacher to principal and from principal to parent and Director.** If the situation requires communication to the community or to the media, this will come from the Director of Education. The Director will decide which information should, or should not, be given to the public.

## **9.0 INCIDENT REPORTS**

In the context of outdoor education, an “incident” is an event that results in, *or has the potential to*, cause an injury<sup>7</sup>. Incidents may include any of the following:

- ∞ a personal injury or accident
- ∞ an accident that results in damage to equipment property
- ∞ a “near miss” that could have resulted in serious injury or damage

A “near miss” or “close call” is usually an accident that is averted by luck or good fortune. Near misses occur more often than accidents, but they should be carefully reported and assessed so they don’t happen again. Both students and staff should be asked to describe and discuss near misses so that they become part of the ongoing improvement of outdoor education safety.<sup>8</sup>

All incidents must be submitted to school administration on Incident Report Forms currently in use in both schools. The Principal will inform the Director of Education. Incident reports should always be followed by a careful assessment:

- ∞ Were required practices followed? (ie. life preservers, supervision ratio)
- ∞ Were First Aid and/or emergency procedures followed?
- ∞ Were safe, or recommended, practices followed? (ie. Safety Talks)
- ∞ Was the equipment safe, well-maintained and used properly?

The results of this assessment must be communicated to staff and parents and then used to improve the safety of future outdoor activities.

## **10.0 SAFETY REVIEWS**

Safety reviews are a process of identifying strengths and weaknesses so that improvements can be made.<sup>9</sup> They are an essential part of risk management. As new situations arise, the risk management plan is never “written in stone”; it will always be a work-in-progress. There are various levels of the safety review process:

### **Level 1: Teacher/Supervisor**

During and after each activity, the teacher or supervisor reflects on the safety issues that have arisen and then adjusts future activities to address them. This is a process of professional and program development. Significant learnings should be shared with other teachers, school administration and the Outdoor Education Committee.

### **Level 2: School Administration**

In-school administrators should monitor required and recommended practices and safety issues that arise and then address these issues at a school-wide level. Safety issues that require a school division response should be communicated to the Outdoor Education Committee and Director of Education.

### **Level 3: Outdoor Education Committee**

As the Outdoor Education Committee reviews the curriculum, staffing and scheduling of its outdoor education program, it should always identify safety issues that need to be addressed. It is also a good precautionary practice to document these discussions and decisions, in case an accident occurs that raises liability issues. Safety should be an agenda item at all Outdoor Education Committee meetings so that emerging issues are addressed on an ongoing basis:

- ∞ Review safety problems or issues that have arisen
- ∞ Review incident and accident reports
- ∞ Expand the list of hazards and recommended practices
- ∞ Schedule safety reviews of sites and equipment
- ∞ Share ideas for improving safety
- ∞ Plan professional development for reducing risk and promoting safety
- ∞ Improve and refine the Outdoor Education Safety Guide

### **Level 4: School Division**

When safety procedures require changes or additions to school division policy, these will be carried forward to the Board by the Director of Education. The Outdoor Education Safety Guide should continually be updated to reflect safety improvements.



## 11.1 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is also important to note that outdoor education activities come under the purview of Occupational Health and Safety. As such, outdoor activities and sites must follow OH&S guidelines for staff safety in terms of supervision, equipment and activity:

**11.2 Supervision:** Teachers and administrators will often be in a lead supervisory role with other adults – teachers, educational assistants, parents or Elders. Certification, experience or position may result in one's role as Lead Supervisor:

- ∞ Wilderness qualification or certification
- ∞ Knowledge, skill or technical ability in the specific activity
- ∞ Previous experience in leading similar activities
- ∞ Experience in a variety of outdoor activities
- ∞ School administrative responsibilities
- ∞ Traditional knowledge of terrain or waterways
- ∞ Safety/hazard knowledge or experience

All Lead Supervisors are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of those they supervise. They may have the following responsibilities<sup>10</sup>:

- ∞ Outline and explain potential hazards of the activity.
- ∞ Advise supervisors of required and recommended practices.
- ∞ Inform supervisors of first aid access and emergency supplies.
- ∞ Inform supervisors of emergency or evacuation procedures.
- ∞ Check that other supervisors understand safety and safe work procedures.
- ∞ Ensure that safety and protective equipment is in good working order.
- ∞ Supervise the proper handling and storage of equipment.
- ∞ Oversee the transportation and movement of students.
- ∞ Address unsafe acts or conditions.
- ∞ Check the progress of new or uncertain supervisors.
- ∞ Monitor supervision and activities constantly.
- ∞ Set a good example for all procedures, activities and supervision.
- ∞ Report injuries, accidents or close calls.
- ∞ Inform school and division administrators of faults or deficiencies that have been noted.
- ∞ Inform the division's OH&S Committee of any continuing problems with equipment or facilities.

**11.3 Equipment:** The very nature of outdoor activities involves wear and tear on equipment as it is used for a wide variety of land, water and snow activities. Concerns should be reported immediately to in-school administrators so that repairs or replacement can occur. An incident or accident involving equipment should always be followed by a safety inspection. Equipment should be regularly inspected for deficiencies and assessed in the annual school inventory.

A First Aid kit must be on site or on hand for all outdoor education activities. The type of kit will depend on the type of activity, number of students and distance from the hospital.

The kit should be re-supplied immediately after use and inspected regularly as per OH&S guidelines.

#### **11.4 Facilities**

The Wilderness Camp consists of one multi-use building, storage building and two outdoor toilets. As property of the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division, the Camp must be inspected regularly to monitor its school and public use and to remove hazards such as broken glass or “hung up” trees. It is important to note that, by its very nature, there are always minor hazards to be negotiated in an outdoor education program - paths that are obstructed by trees and branches, stream crossings that require careful footing, shorelines that are rocky or slippery, portages that are muddy or steep. These are unavoidable hazards that require safety talks and careful attention and supervision. It should never be the intent of an outdoor education program to remove or avoid such hazards - to turn wilderness areas into parks. Adjusting and adapting to nature is an essential part of outdoor learning.

#### **12.0 RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION**

The following records should be kept by the schools and Outdoor Education Committee in the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division:

- ∞ Accident and incident reports
- ∞ Statistics on the frequency and nature of accidents
- ∞ First Aid records (ie. First Aid treatment book)
- ∞ Outdoor Education Committee safety discussions and decisions
- ∞ Education and training of staff supervisors (ie. First Aid certifications, Wilderness certifications, etc.)
- ∞ Forms: Trip Plan forms, Parent Consent forms, Incident Report forms

## APPENDIX A

### OUTDOOR EDUCATION: ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

HAZARD	RECOMMENDED PRACTICE
Bear/moose contact	Carry and use noisemakers Back away quietly, keep together.
Extreme Heat/UV	Carry a safe water supply. Sunscreen. Wear hats and plan shady stops.
Snow, Extreme Cold	Warm and protective clothes, preferably in layers, with appropriate footwear and headwear. Carry matches, fire starter, kindling.
Rain	Rain gear, dry/warm footwear
Lightning storm	Shelter on shore, in low terrain if possible
Sprains, strains, burns, breaks	First Aid treatment, assist to transportation
Broken limbs	Temporary First Aid, transport to hospital if possible or call for assistance; notify hospital: 306- 833-2016; call 911 if necessary for EMT support.
Bee/wasp stings	First Aid treatment, transport to hospital if necessary
Mosquitoes/black flies	Mosquito repellent, bug jackets or netting
Bus – breakdown or stuck	Communication equipment (at least two cell phones, if there is coverage)
Lost student or supervisor	Keep group together and supervised; signal with whistles or calling; emergency call 911.
Broken limbs, major injury	Temporary first aid, emergency procedure, call 911
Forest fire	Emergency procedure, including evacuation and emergency contact: Ile-a-la-Crosse Fire Cache: 306-833-3230 and Buffalo Narrows Fire Center: 1- 306-235-1804

## APPENDIX B

### OUTDOOR EDUCATION: HUMAN HAZARDS

HAZARDS: STUDENTS	RECOMMENDED PRACTICE
Student unawareness	Safety talks before and during activity
Lack of knowledge or skills	Trip rehearsals, classroom preparation, minimum standards
Poor strength/stamina	Apply minimum standards or group the students accordingly
Non-cooperation	Safety talks, increase supervision
Interpersonal conflict	Group students & supervisors accordingly
Fear/anxiety	Safety talks, one-to-one intervention
Competitive/daring	Safety talks, one-to-one supervision or intervention
Poor safety attitude	Safety talks, one-to-one supervision or intervention
Medical condition	Plan with parent for medication before, during or after the outdoor education trip, if necessary

HAZARDS: SUPERVISORS	RECOMMENDED PRACTICE
Lack of knowledge or skills	PD, peer counselling, increased supervision
Poor strength/stamina	Plan for increased supervision and minimum standards
Health/medical condition	Inform administration of impairments or health concerns, carry medication or treatments needed beyond First Aid Kit
Poor group control or rapport	Safety talks, increased supervision
Fear/anxiety in the bush	Inform administration of fears, anxieties or concerns, plan for low-stress activities and increased supervision
<p>Note: It is important to note that, although staff need to sleep and relax, they are on duty 24/7 during multi-day outdoor excursions. The supervision ratio is therefore very important. All staff must exercise the highest level of supervision and conduct as required by the Education Act, STF Code of Ethics and School Division Policy.</p>	

**APPENDIX C**  
**Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division**  
**REGISTRATION DAY**  
**OUTDOOR EDUCATION PERMISSION FORM**

I hereby give permission for my daughter/son, \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division Outdoor Education Program.

I understand that some of these outdoor activities will occur in the local area outside the community and at the Wilderness Camp. These will be activities that follow the school curriculum – that give my son/daughter an opportunity to learn from nature.

I am aware that there are risks involved with outdoor activities, and I understand that the school has a plan in place to reduce, or minimize, these risks. I share the common goal of school and home - the safety of our young people.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX D**  
**Outdoor Education Day Trip**  
**PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION FORM**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This is to inform you that we are planning an outdoor education trip that includes your son/daughter:\_\_\_\_\_.

The day (date) of our outdoor education field trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Our destination(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Our purpose/activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We will be leaving the school at: \_\_\_\_\_ and returning to the school at \_\_\_\_\_.

We will be travelling by (bus/van/car).

Special Requirements: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
(Please complete, tear along the dotted line, and return to the school.)

To: Rossignol Elementary Community School / Rossignol High School

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We understand that the outdoor education field trip planned for my son/daughter will be planned with safety in mind and that students will be expected to behave as well as they do in the school.

I/We hereby give permission for my daughter/son to participate in the outdoor education field trip on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Significant Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX E

### OUTDOOR EDUCATION DAY TRIP PLAN

NAME OF TEACHER	
TRIP SUMMARY (Location & duration)	
TIME PLAN (Drop-off & pick-up times and locations, length of excursion, daily itinerary)	
STUDENTS (Attach class list, if necessary)	
SUPERVISION (Teachers, EAs, Elders, Board-approved chaperones)	
EQUIPMENT NEEDS (Students, School)	
COST (If required for approval or funding.)	
EVALUATION	
TRIP CHECKLIST	
Division/School Approval	Parental permission
Bus arrangements	Communications system
First Aid Kit	Emergency contacts
Fire Danger Level	Weather forecast
TRIP APPROVAL	
Principal:	Date:
Director (if required):	Date:



# APPENDIX F

## ILE-A-LA-CROSSE SCHOOL DIVISION

### Outdoor Education Multi-Day Trip Plan

This form is to be completed by the teacher who has accepted responsibility for the outdoor education excursion. **It is to be completed prior to the commencement of the excursion** and must be submitted to the school principal for approval. Please use this form as a checklist to organize and plan your excursion or program. Complete the front, where applicable, for all excursions. More specialized excursions require additional information on the back of this form. All teachers should become familiar with, and follow, the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division Outdoor Education Safety Guide.

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Excursion: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Departure from School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Return (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Return to School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Class/Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other supervisors: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of other supervisors: M\_\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_\_ Number of students: M\_\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Excursion:		Transportation:		Funding:	
	Walk/hike		Bus	Source of funding:	
	Field Trip		Van		
	Berry-picking		Car		Materials/Food Cost
	Ski/snowshoe		Bicycle		Transportation Cost
	Camping		Walk/hike		Student Cost
	Canoeing		Ski	Yes No	Fundraising
	Cycling		Snowshoe		
	Waterfront		Canoe		Provide Budget Summary (if needed)
	Other		Other		
Permission/Authorization:		Communicate Responsibilities:		Checklist For the Teacher Supervisor:	
	Principal		Students		Parent/Guardian Permission
	Parents		Teachers		Trip Plan
	Director of Education		Parents		Contact Person
	ICSD School Board		Other Supervisors		Read Outdoor Education Safety Guidelines
			Drivers		First Aid Kit
					Equipment Readiness
For the Students:					Weather Report
	Program/Curriculum Content				Fire Danger Level
	Behavioural/Learning Expectations				Emergency vehicle/bus
	Safety Talk(s)				Emergency Contact Numbers
	Accommodation		Clothing/Equipment		Alternate Plans
	Meals		Student Evaluation		Thank You Letters

Other Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX G**

### **TEACHER/SUPERVISOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION CHECKLIST**

- ☐ Curricular planning for the outdoor education activity
- ☐ Instruction that encourages curriculum outcomes
- ☐ Safety talks before and during the activity
- ☐ Appropriate supervision for the number and needs of the students
- ☐ Awareness of the common or recommended practices for the activity
- ☐ Trip Plan submitted and signed
- ☐ Parent/Guardian Permission
- ☐ Weather and Fire Danger reports
- ☐ Communication equipment appropriate for location, duration & nature of the activity
- ☐ Contact information for school administration and bussing
- ☐ Contact information for emergency situations (injury, accident, fire)
- ☐ Incident reports for accidents, injuries or near-misses
- ☐ Post-trip reflection (professional)
- ☐ Post-trip discussion with students (educational)
- ☐ Post-trip report with administration (if needed)

## **APPENDIX H**

### **Sample Outdoor Education Trip Plans**

Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment: <http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/Physical-Education-Safety-Guidelines>

General Guidelines

Backpacking

Camping

Winter Camping

Canoe Tripping

Canoeing

Lake Swimming

Cross-country Skiing / Snowshoeing

Skating (Ice)

**[Note: For ICSD supervision ratios, please refer to section 6.2]**

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION GENERAL GUIDELINES

ALL GRADES	SUPERVISION
<p>Have all outdoor education excursions approved by principal or designate.</p> <p>Approval can include consideration of itinerary, suitability of trip activities to the curriculum, travel time, safety factors, supervision arrangements, age appropriateness (refer to board of education's field trip policy).</p> <p>Have board of education official sign a detailed application form for all overnight trips.</p> <p>Have parents complete parental consent forms prior to any student going on outdoor education trip.</p> <p>For all trips requiring transportation, prepare a list of all the students in each vehicle, provide it to the chaperones, and leave a copy at the school.</p> <p>For overnight trips, have students provide medical information to the chaperone, including their health card number and any special health information.</p> <p>Make supervisors on trip aware of any students with medical problems and any student on medication.</p> <p>Have students on vital medication bring an extra supply. Be sure this medication is in a clearly marked container in the supervisor's possession. Handle all medications in accordance with the board of education's policy on dispensing medication.</p> <p>Provide trip supervisors with a list of parent contact/emergency contact numbers.</p> <p>Use only staff or volunteer drivers who comply with board of education requirements for insurance.</p> <p>Provide the teacher supervising the trip with telephone number and location of nearest doctor, and location of nearest hospital and nearest phone.</p> <p>Define maximum number of days allowed for outdoor education trips in board of education policy.</p> <p>Typical information on parent consent forms includes itinerary, date, relationship of trip activities to curriculum, supervision arrangements, cost per student, behavioural expectations, inherent risks, and where applicable, date and time of parent information meeting.</p> <p>Provide students with a list of recommended clothing and personal items suitable for the specific activity.</p> <p>Wear sun protection for all outdoor education activities.</p>	<p>Provide both male and female chaperones for mixed gender groups on overnight trips.</p> <p>Have access to a vehicle for emergency purposes.</p> <p>Designate a supervisor (e.g., teacher or parent) who is not the supervisor in charge of the trip to transport an injured student to hospital.</p>

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## BACKPACKING

Day trips from school or base camp – Grades 6-12

Extended trips with overnight camping – Grades 10-12

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>GRADES 6-12</b>				
<p>Collect and check all necessary equipment before the trip.</p> <p>Equipment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compass</li> <li>• whistle or other signaling device</li> <li>• first aid kit</li> <li>• nutritious food which does not require preparation</li> <li>• adequate water</li> <li>• sun protection</li> <li>• matches in waterproof container.</li> </ul>	<p>Wear comfortable and durable flat shoes or boots.</p> <p>Wear clothing in layers suitable for the season.</p> <p>Wear sun protection.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p>	<p>Use only designated trails.</p> <p>Take a map of the route on the trip and leave a copy with the supervisor at the school.</p> <p>Ensure that teacher is familiar with the route.</p> <p>If backpacking trip originates from base camp, leave a map with the supervisor at base camp.</p>	<p>Have trip supervisors carry any necessary medication for designated students.</p> <p>Plan trip so that length and difficulty is appropriate for age and ability of students.</p> <p>Use a buddy system.</p> <p>Familiarize students with the route.</p> <p>Postpone trip if there is any indication of threatening weather that could put student safety at risk.</p> <p>Make students aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emergency procedures</li> <li>• signal to assemble.</li> </ul> <p>Avoid traveling in darkness.</p> <p>Ensure that trip supervisors are aware of location of nearest phone and/or help in an emergency.</p>	<p>Provide on-site supervision.</p> <p>Recommended ratio of supervisors to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• day hikes – 1:15</li> <li>• local overnight hikes – 1:15</li> <li>• distant overnight hikes – 1:8.</li> </ul>

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## CAMPING

An extended overnight camping experience in an outdoor environment with students using tents and doing their own food preparation. No canoeing.

Dorm camping – Grades 1-12

Tent camping – Grades 1-12

Overnight camping – Grades 4-12

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>ALL GRADES</b>				
<p>If cooking on stoves, use propane/liquid gas type stoves.</p> <p>Collect and check all necessary equipment before the trip.</p> <p>Equipment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whistle or other signaling device</li> <li>• first aid kit</li> <li>• flashlight</li> <li>• shovel</li> <li>• sun protection</li> <li>• waterproofed matches.</li> </ul>	<p>No bare feet in campsite area.</p> <p>Wear clothing in layers suitable for the season.</p> <p>Clothing for overnight camping includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sleeping bag/blanket</li> <li>• rain gear.</li> </ul> <p>Wear sun protection.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p>	<p>Plan trip so that washroom facilities are accessible.</p> <p>Have access to a phone (cell phone or regular phone within walking distance).</p>	<p>Plan program in detail with contingency plans for inclement weather.</p> <p>Remove all food items, gum and cosmetics from tents at night and keep in bear-proof containers or cars.</p> <p>Filling and lighting camp stoves is an adult responsibility.</p> <p>Make students aware of behavioural expectations, boundaries for activity, assembly procedures.</p> <p>Plan program activities that are age and skill level appropriate.</p> <p>No open flames near tents.</p> <p>Develop a process to account for students and to identify any students who may be missing.</p> <p>Provide food and drink of a nutritious quality and quantity appropriate for high energy outdoor activity.</p>	<p>Provide constant visual supervision when filling and lighting camp stoves.</p> <p>Provide on-site supervision for other activities.</p> <p>Have at least one leader with current first aid certification.</p> <p>Have some leaders with previous tent camping experience.</p> <p>Have access to a vehicle for emergency purposes.</p> <p>Designate an adult supervisor who is not the "in-charge" supervisor to accompany an injured student to hospital.</p> <p>Recommended ratio of supervisors to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 4-9 – 1:8</li> <li>• Grades 10-12 – 1:15.</li> </ul>

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## WINTER CAMPING

Warm winter camping means heat sources are inside shelters.

Cold winter camping means heat sources are external to shelters.  
Grades 10-12

**WINTER TENT CAMPING is not a recommended activity for students from kindergarten to grade 9 and is a high-risk activity at all grade levels. Schools are encouraged to consider alternative program options to replace high-risk activities. Teachers who wish to instruct a high-risk activity like winter camping require written permission from the board of education.**

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>SECONDARY LEVEL</b>				
Equipment includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first aid kit</li> <li>• whistle for each student</li> <li>• waterproof matches.</li> <li>• a lightweight camp stove.</li> </ul>	<p>Wear clothing that is appropriate for weather conditions.</p> <p>Use layering principles for clothing.</p> <p>Carry a dry change of clothing for each student.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p> <p>Wear sunscreen while outdoors.</p>	<p>Use facilities/site that is consistent with age and experience of campers.</p>	<p>Instruct students in the prevention and treatment of hypothermia/frostbite.</p> <p>Instruct students in outdoor winter survival techniques.</p> <p>Establish a systematic pattern for group travel and communication.</p> <p>Leave a complete trip itinerary in the school.</p> <p>Obtain parent permission for participation in winter camping.</p>	<p>Have instructor/supervisors with previous winter camping experience.</p> <p>Have at least one supervisor with St. John Emergency First Aid Certificate or equivalent.</p> <p>Supervisor/student ratio: 1:8.</p>



# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## CANOE TRIPPING

Traveling in groups by canoe through wilderness or semi-wilderness areas for a period of time which includes at least one overnight camp – Grades 10-12

**CANOE TRIPPING is not a recommended activity for students from kindergarten to grade 9 and is a high-risk activity at all grade levels. Schools are encouraged to consider alternative program options to replace high-risk activities. Teachers who wish to instruct a high-risk activity like canoe tripping require written permission from the board of education.**

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>SECONDARY LEVEL</b>				
Equipment includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extra paddle per canoe</li> <li>first aid kit</li> <li>waterproof matches</li> <li>8 m length of rope</li> <li>repair kit for canoe.</li> </ul>	<p>Wear properly fitting, Transport Canada approved life jacket/P.F.D., with whistle attached, at all times while on the water.</p> <p>Clothing includes:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rain gear</li> <li>appropriate clothing in layers</li> <li>dry change of clothing.</li> </ul> </p> <p>Wear sun protection.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p>	<p>Plan a route that is appropriate to age/ability of students.</p>	<p>Complete a trip itinerary and file it with an appropriate school official.</p> <p>Develop an emergency action plan and communicate it to all involved with the trip.</p> <p>No trips through white water.</p> <p>Test all candidates for participation in a school canoe trip for the minimum standards in each of the areas as outlined below:</p> <p><b>1. WATER SAFETY</b></p> <p>Prior to water activities successfully complete the following swim test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>swim 100 m continuously any stroke</li> <li>tread water for 3 minutes</li> <li>put on life jacket in water</li> <li>demonstrate the help/huddle position.</li> </ul>	<p>Have at least one supervisor with Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association Level II Canoe Tripping certification. If the group is divided into two trips, then have two supervisors with these qualifications.</p> <p>Have at least one supervisor with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Lifeguard Service Lifeguard Certificate, or</li> <li>Current first aid qualifications such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. John Emergency First Aid Certificate, or</li> <li>Canadian Red Cross Emergency First Aid Certificate, or</li> <li>Royal Life Saving Society Aquatic Emergency Care Certificate, or</li> <li>Canadian Ski Patrol First Aid Certificate.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## CANOE TRIPPING continued

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>SECONDARY LEVEL (Continued)</b>				
			<p><b>2. CANOEING SKILLS</b> Demonstrate basic competence in the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• power stroke</li> <li>• "J" stroke</li> <li>• sweep strokes</li> <li>• draw stroke</li> <li>• backwater strokes</li> <li>• proper entry/exit from canoe</li> <li>• self rescues in dry and/or swamped canoes</li> <li>• canoe over canoe rescue procedures</li> <li>• synchronized strokes</li> <li>• packing a canoe</li> <li>• portaging techniques.</li> </ul> <p>Have mastered the "J" stroke.</p> <p>Instruct students on how to handle unexpected wind and wave conditions.</p> <p><b>3. RELATED AREAS</b> Familiarize students with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic first aid and hypothermia</li> <li>• personal camping and canoeing equipment and repairs</li> <li>• suitable clothing</li> <li>• camping skills and safety</li> <li>• environmental concerns</li> <li>• use of a compass</li> <li>• map reading.</li> </ul> <p>Postpone trip if there is any indication of inclement weather or cold water conditions severe enough to put students' safety at risk.</p> <p>Teach skills in proper progression.</p>	<p>Have at least one supervisor who has experience with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bug season</li> <li>• cold water rapids (recognize inherent danger and ways to avoid)</li> <li>• cooking over open fire without a grate</li> <li>• campercraft waterproofing methods during wet weather.</li> </ul> <p>Have at least one supervisor with general knowledge of the area.</p> <p>Establish a systematic pattern for group travel and communication.</p> <p>Have two adult supervisors on overnight trips.</p> <p>Where female and male students participate in a trip, provide both female and male supervisors.</p> <p>Ratio of supervisors to students: 1:8.</p>

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## CANOEING

### Pools – Grades 6-12

### Lake Water Canoeing – Grades 6-12

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>GRADES 6-12</b>				
No aluminum canoes in pools.  Check paddles for cracks and splinters.	<p>Wear correct fitting. Transport Canada approved P.F.D./life jackets, with whistle attached for open water canoeing.</p> <p>Wear clothing that is appropriate for open water canoeing.</p> <p>Wear sun protection.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p>	Select water conditions appropriate for the skill level of the group.	<p>Before open water canoeing, demonstrate competency in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• power stroke</li> <li>• “J” stroke</li> <li>• sweep stroke</li> <li>• draw stroke</li> <li>• backwater stroke</li> <li>• proper entry/exit from canoe</li> <li>• self rescues into dry and/or swamped canoes</li> <li>• canoe over canoe rescue procedures</li> <li>• synchronized strokes, positioning of paddlers, and packing the canoe.</li> </ul> <p>Have a rescue craft on shore and accessible while students are canoeing on open water.</p> <p>Prior to water activities successfully complete the following swim test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• swim 100 m continuously any stroke</li> <li>• tread water for 3 minutes</li> <li>• put on a life jacket in the water</li> <li>• demonstrate the help/huddle position.</li> </ul>	<p>Have an instructor with Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association Level One Lakewater Canoeing Certification.</p> <p>Provide on-site supervision when students are canoeing.</p> <p>Have access to a vehicle for emergency purposes.</p> <p>Designate a supervisor (e.g., teacher or parent) who is not the “in-charge” person to transport an injured student to hospital.</p> <p>Have at least one supervisor with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Lifeguard Service Lifeguard certificate, or</li> <li>• Current first aid qualifications, or</li> <li>• St. John Emergency First Aid Certificate, or</li> <li>• Royal Life Saving Society Aquatic Emergency Care Certificate, or</li> <li>• Canadian Ski Patrol First Aid Certificate.</li> </ul> <p>Ratio of supervisors to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 6-9 – 1:10</li> <li>• Grades 10-12 – 1:15</li> </ul>

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## LAKE SWIMMING – Grades 4-12

Lake, creek and river swimming are high-risk activities. Schools are encouraged to consider alternative program options to replace high-risk activities. Teachers who wish to instruct high-risk activities like lake, creek or river swimming require written permission from the board of education.

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>GRADES 4-12</b>				
Equipment includes: • buoy line • whistle or other signaling device • first aid kit(s) • throw line • reaching assists.	Wear appropriate swimming attire.  Wear sunscreen.  No jewelry.  Tie back long hair or wear it in a bun.	Use a swimming area that is: • clearly marked • free from hazards • roped off with floating devices • of suitable water temperature • reasonably clear.  No swimming in fast moving rivers or streams.  Prior to trip, check with local authorities to determine whether water is safe for swimming.	Written parental permission for child to be involved in any swimming activity is desirable. Permission note can indicate child's swimming ability (e.g. non-swimmer, capable swimmer).  Identify and observe non-swimmers.  Follow posted rules and regulations of swimming area.  Use a definite counting system at regular intervals (e.g., number students and every 15 minutes blow whistle and have them count off).  Use a buddy system.  No swimming if there are any indications of bad weather.  No swimming after dark.  Swimming allowed only in designated area.  No distance swims.  Position lifeguard so s/he is clearly visible to all swimmers at all times.  In an emergency situation, lifeguard is in charge.  Have an emergency action plan in place.  Inform students of acceptable standards of behaviour in the water.  No diving.  No flotation devices.  Practice an emergency water drill (e.g., assemble on shore with 3 loud whistle blasts).  Length of swim depends on skill and age of swimmers, condition of atmosphere, condition of water, time of day.  Teach skills in proper progression.	Provide on-site supervision.  Have one supervisor with current certification : • National Lifeguard Service Lifeguard Certificate Waterfront option, or • National Lifeguard Service Pool Certificate with two years waterfront experience  Provide at least one other adult supervisor in addition to the lifeguard.  Have access to a vehicle for emergency purposes.  Designate a supervisor (e.g., teacher or parent) who is not the "in charge" supervisor to transport an injured student to hospital.  Lifeguard to swimmer ratio: 1:25.

# CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING SNOWSHOEING

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>ALL GRADES</b>				
<p>Keep a first aid kit in an accessible location.</p> <p><b>CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING:</b></p> <p>Use skis, boots and poles that are in good repair and of appropriate size for the skier.</p> <p><b>SNOWSHOEING:</b></p> <p>Use snowshoes with frames and bindings that are in good repair.</p>	<p>Wear clothing appropriate for outdoor activity.</p> <p>Wear layered clothing.</p> <p>Carry hats and gloves.</p> <p>Wear sunscreen.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p>	<p>Define specific routes to the students, so they are aware of the boundaries for the activity, whether using a commercial or noncommercial site.</p> <p>Consider sun, wind and snow conditions, and suitability of terrain when choosing a site. An ideal noncommercial site would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a level field with practice tracks skied in by the instructor</li> <li>• a hill with a gentle slope and a long run out, or the bottom section of a larger hill</li> <li>• a variety of terrain</li> <li>• proximity to warmth, food, waxing and other facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>Establish emergency procedures and explain those procedures to the students.</p> <p>Teach skills in proper progression.</p> <p>Discuss recognizing and treating frostbite and hypothermia with the students.</p> <p>Have students check to be sure boots are secure in bindings.</p> <p>Ski poles have sharp tips. Caution students about their use, especially when working close to others.</p> <p>Be aware of students with a history of asthma and other respiratory problems.</p> <p>Use a buddy system.</p> <p>Make parents aware of off-campus activities.</p>	<p>Designate a supervisor (teacher, parent or responsible adult) who has a vehicle and is not the supervisor "in charge" to accompany an injured student to hospital.</p> <p>Clearly outline duties of supervisors, including supervisors of small groups of students.</p> <p>Provide in the area supervision for all sites within walking distance of the school and during field trips.</p>



## SKATING (ICE)

EQUIPMENT	CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR	FACILITIES	SPECIAL RULES/ INSTRUCTION	SUPERVISION
<b>ALL GRADES</b>				
<p>Wear a CSA approved helmet. Helmets reduce the potential for injury.</p> <p>Keep a first aid kit available on site. If the school is not bringing a kit to the arena, ensure that the arena manager has a kit available and knows its location.</p>	<p>Clothing/gear includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>properly fitted skates</li> <li>gloves or mitts.</li> </ul> <p>When skating outdoors, dress for weather conditions.</p> <p>No jewelry.</p> <p>If skating outdoors, wear sunscreen on exposed parts of the body.</p>	<p>Before skating on outdoor ponds, determine ice safety with absolute certainty. Contact local authorities for information.</p>	<p>Select activities that are appropriate to the skill level of the students.</p> <p>Teach skills in proper progression.</p> <p>Avoid tag type games, racing and "crack-the-whip".</p> <p>Provide ice space for beginning skaters separate from accomplished skaters until beginning skaters master basic skills.</p> <p>Make students and parents aware of the need for extra caution and control on the ice including common procedures such as skating in the same direction during a free skate.</p> <p>Inform parents by letter of their child's involvement in skating and the importance of wearing a helmet and proper hand covering.</p> <p>Discuss recognizing and treating frostbite prior to outdoor skating.</p> <p>Stress skating technique, not speed, in all games, challenges, and drills.</p>	<p>Provide on-site supervision.</p>